8 ways to create new collections faster with Infor PLM for Fashion

In today's dynamic, highly digital, and data-driven fashion industry, the use of spreadsheets and other outdated, manual-entry tools often result in significant time delays, data inaccuracies, linear sequential processes, and an inability to integrate with shared data libraries. When the greatest advantage fashion and apparel companies have is getting new ideas to consumers quickly, they can't afford to let technology slow them down. But satisfying today's conscious consumers can be tricky. They have developed more sophisticated expectations around the environmental impact, product sustainability, and circularity that constitutes a modern brand experience. It's no longer enough for brands seeking climate-conscious consumers to say, "We make sure our suppliers are compliant," they have to prove it.

That's why apparel, footwear, accessories, and textile brands need Infor® PLM for Fashion—a modern, cutting-edge product lifecycle management (PLM) solution designed specifically for the demands of 21st-century fashion companies. The platform empowers brands to create sustainable new styles with greater flexibility and more consistent quality, while ensuring transparency and visibility for all stakeholders. It can also help brands increase the use of sustainable materials, production techniques, and processes, to minimize the environmental impact. Let's explore eight ways fashion companies can benefit from replacing the limitations of spreadsheets and other manual-entry tools with the advanced, intuitive, and fashion-specific functionality of Infor PLM for Fashion.

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1. Simplify internal collaboration

When the creative talents of your design team are in sync with the analytical talents of your business teams, true collaboration can happen. With Infor PLM for Fashion, design, technical, and commercial teams can share information through an intuitive, common user interface. By bridging the gap between creative and analytical thinking, brands can develop exciting new ideas faster, while remaining within realistic financial and operational constraints.

Designers and head of merchandise can track against the line plan to continuously verify how close a new collection, for example, is to the defined targets. Thereby, line planning can assist in developing the right type of products to fit market needs, and help avoid over-production, markdowns, and waste. It also serves as a first high-level planning for different market channels, with quantity estimates that can be used for early production commitments to suppliers.

With this level of visibility across the entire organization, you can streamline processes for reviewing and approving specifications, images, bill of materials (BOMs), construction details, measurements, colors, sampling, costing, and quotations.

2. Share information with your suppliers and partners

Today's business is global—a typical fashion company may have resources in multiple locations globally. A merchandise team in New York, designers in Milan, and suppliers i.e., manufacturers in Asia. With Infor PLM for Fashion's Partner Collaboration module, teams can upload their inspirations and work together with buyers and suppliers on the product specifications such as measurement and images—as well as request for quotations and samples for testing—with supply chain partners around the world. That's a lot of moving pieces that need to be tracked, managed, and shared which can be easily monitored and tracked in Infor PLM for Fashion. To help this global supply chain collaboration, Infor PLM for Fashion's Partner Collaboration module is available in multiple languages such as US English, Chinese, Spanish, Turkish, German, Italian and French.

Infor PLM for Fashion ensures an exceptional user experience across the organization and mobility to work on PC, Mac, tablet, or smartphone.

3. Prove sustainable and compliant sourcing

Genuine sustainability starts during the sourcing stage—ideally before design work begins. Infor PLM for Fashion can help you manage material composition details down to yarn and fiber level with information about supplier, country of origin, and test standards to make sure new collections and styles have less impact on the environment and can be reused or recycled.

It is also possible to manage not just the main supplier but also the sub-sub supplier relationships (the "tiered" supply chain). Supplier compliance is part of the solution as well as the ability to store certificates and factory test/inspection documents in the built-in document management solution. A standard integration to a third-party party solution from Made2Flow adds additional capabilities around sustainability impact measurements. This data can be used while developing the collection, and later shared externally for transparency to consumers, stakeholders and for governmental reporting requirements. The data can also be stored at the product level for sustainability and traceability purposes.

Being able to prove that products and production supply chains are sustainable is a very important capability to help protect the brand—and it all starts with embedding sustainability metrics as early as possible in the design phase.

4. Incorporate planning into design

With raw materials to source and store, retailers to replenish, and new seasons to plan for, Infor PLM for Fashion allows for functionality planning at every stage of the fashion process—so you can avoid the manufacturing bottlenecks that slow down production. The built-in flexibility of Infor PLM for Fashion allows designers to either work to a merchandising strategy or generate new and dynamic or trendy styles, which can easily be mapped to a plan.

As well as helping create the right mix of products from the outset, the powerful analytics in Infor PLM for Fashion help your commercial teams quickly identify shifts in demand and make adjustments along the way.

5. Streamline design

Your designers and developers need to be able to do their best work—so your brand can stay ahead of trends and release exciting new styles and collections. Infor PLM for Fashion is an effective platform and collaborative hub that allows teams to efficiently streamline the creation of new styles and collections, like designing and developing finished goods, components, trims, and materials such as fabrics, leather, and other raw materials. Some ways Infor PLM for Fashion can help streamline the design process include:

- Automating repetitive tasks and focus on new ideas, rather than manual processes
- Mass creating, editing, and updating many different styles, materials, and trims at the same time
- Adding components with simple drag-and-drop functionality
- Creating libraries of previous designs, together with specifications, BOMs, costing, and construction details
- Accessing supplier details and control quality

6. Work concurrently

You've launched a new collection, and it's selling well. Now you need to make the most of your inventory to replenish retail racks and ensure that profitably meets demand. With shared access to data, the entire organization can plan, design, develop, and source multiple collections in real time, no matter where staff is located.

Infor PLM for Fashion allows you to collaborate both internally and externally with your design and development teams, as well as partners and suppliers globally. This will allow immediate visibility as well as the ability to pass information on as soon as it becomes available to the people who need it, rather than only share information at specified points stipulated by a sequential model. With this information consistently flowing, it's easier to manage and track the critical path, or what is also known as the time and action calendar, of different phases, so schedules can be revised and updated as needed.

7. Superior user experience

Facilitating true collaboration across the business means giving your team members the ability to configure the software to their individual roles and personal preferences. With a list interface similar to that of Excel®, it's simple for first-time users to learn how to use Infor PLM for Fashion. The platform provides personalized, configurable workspaces that can be used in context or as a starting point, and comes with a host of smart features, including drag-and-drop capabilities, mass functions, multi-select options, and image and attachment management. Infor PLM for Fashion ensures an exceptional user experience across the organization and mobility to work on PC, Mac, tablet, or smartphone.

8. Integrate, automate, extend

Design, development, and manufacturing teams need to be able to make accurate decisions on the fly. To help make this possible, Infor PLM for Fashion efficiently integrates both Infor and third-party applications using Infor OS, a technology platform that supports:

- Automation via workflows across solutions

- Embedded insights, Artificial Intelligence (AI)/ Machine Learning (ML) through Data Lake and analytics

- Highly configurable user experiences via role-based workspaces

- Tools for making extensions as needed e.g., to create mobile Apps.

Additionally, we believe in providing new PLM and technology capabilities regularly to ensure customers' systems are up-to-date, and always current to enable them to quickly adopt to new market requirements. The powerful and scalable framework helps eliminate operational silos, dramatically improve exception management, and achieve unparalleled end-to-end efficiency.

Innovate faster

Infor PLM for Fashion is a powerful PLM and collaboration platform that can help apparel, footwear, accessories, and textile brands and their value chain partners innovate faster, make processes more efficient, and easily share information. Additionally, it enables sustainability integration, supporting your company's efforts to use eco-friendly practices and materials. As a result, fashion brands will have the tools they need to create exciting styles and deliver them to consumers faster and more sustainably, ultimately leading to a competitive edge in the market.

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